



## *More Than One Antoinette*

by Debbie Shewell

This is a scanned copy of the script for **Monstrous Regiment Theatre Company's** 1990 production of *More Than One Antoinette*.

Written and directed for the company by Debbie Shewell, it explores the journeys of Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre, and Antoinette Cosway, the Creole heiress and first Mrs Rochester in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

Further information about the show can be found in its **Productions** page on the company's website: [www.monstrousregiment.co.uk](http://www.monstrousregiment.co.uk)

A copy of the original typescript, including handwritten notes and changes made during rehearsals, from which this scan was made, is held in the Monstrous Regiment archive at the V&A's Theatre and Performance Archives.

Any requests for permission to perform or translate the play should be addressed to the author's agent, Laura Reeve at Berlin Associates, London SE1 3HX ([agents@berlinassociates.com](mailto:agents@berlinassociates.com))

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MORE THAN ONE ANTOINETTE.

by

DEBBIE SHEWELL

Inspired by JANE EYRE and WIDE SARGASSO SEA.

**MONSTROUS REGIMENT**  
**190 UPPER STREET**  
**LONDON N1 1RQ**  
**TEL. 359-9842**

Second draft.  
October 1989

\* After first fire scene Tia becomes  
Other Antoinette

CHARACTERS:

ANTOINETTE - Geraldine Sonerville  
TIA/BERTHA - Natasha Williams  
CHRISTOPHINE - Marsha Miller  
JANE - Abigail Bond  
ROCHESTER - William Garinara

NOTE ON STAGING:

THE SETTING OF THE PIECE IS CONSTANT, AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH CAN BE LIT TO  
CREATE THE VERY DISTINCT WORLDS OF THE CHARACTERS: THE WEST INDIES, AND  
VICTORIAN ENGLAND.

INCORPORATED IN THIS ARE A NUMBER OF ITEMS OF FURNITURE: A BED, A TABLE,  
CHAIRS. A NUMBER OF MIRRORS ARE USED, INCLUDING ACTUAL MIRRORS, MIRROR GEL  
WHICH CAN BE LIT IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT 'DISSOLVES', AND EMPTY FRAMES.

THERE IS ALSO A RAISED AREA, AND A POOL OF WATER.

A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF LIVE AND RECORDED MUSIC IS MENTIONED IN THE TEXT, AS AN  
INDICATION OF ITS USE. JANE AND ROCHESTER'S MUSIC IS ROOTED FIRMLY IN THE  
19th CENTURY, WHILE ANTOINETTE'S MUSIC DRAWS ON TRADITIONAL SONGS AND  
GOSPEL, AND SPILLS OVER INTO BLUES AND JAZZ.

PART ONE

A WOMAN STANDS, HIGH UP ON A PLATFORM.

ANTOINETTE: I dreamed that I was walking in the forest. Not alone.  
(V/O) Someone who hated me was with me. Out of sight. I could  
hear heavy footsteps coming closer and though I struggled  
and screamed I could not move.  
I woke crying.

*Prologue*

~~THE WOMAN FALLS.~~  
BLACKOUT.

JANE AND ANTOINETTE AS CHILDREN. *① Beginning of the story*  
② ANTOINETTE IS TALKING UNCERTAINLY TO THE AUDIENCE.  
JANE IS WRITING IN A NOTEBOOK. AS SHE SPEAKS SHE CORRECTS HER WORK.

ANTOINETTE: My favourite place...

JANE: My Favourite Place.

ANTOINETTE: At Coulibri, at our house...

JANE: My Favourite Occupation.

ANTOINETTE: At Coulibri, at our house, my favourite place....

JANE: My Favourite Occupation As a Child, By Me.

ANTOINETTE: At Coulibri, at our house, my first favourite place....

JANE: My Favourite Occupation As a Child, By Me, Aged Seven.

ANTOINETTE: At Coulibri, at our house, my first favourite place was  
the Glacis.

JANE: My favourite occupation, as a child of some seven years or thereabouts, on long winter afternoons when inclement weather made walking impossible....

ANTOINETTE: The Glacis was a terrace, with a wrought iron rail.

*Christophine*  
MOTHER: ~~(V/O)~~ Antoinette!

ANTOINETTE: ① You could lie your face against the railing, very cool, like the glass of a mirror.

*Christophine*  
MOTHER: Antoinette!

JANE: ① (WHISPERING) My favourite place was on the window seat of the breakfast room, with the thick red curtains pulled tight across to hide me, and a good book, with pictures.

ANTOINETTE: ① And my second favourite place was Christophine's room, our servant, because I wasn't allowed to go in there.

*Christophine*  
MOTHER: Antoinette! ~~Antoinette!~~ *Where are you?*

ANTOINETTE: In Christophine's room there is a picture of the Holy family, and the prayer for happy death.

*Christophine*  
MOTHER: Antoinette! ~~Where are you?~~

ANTOINETTE: ① Sometimes it is so still I think it is obeh in that room and hidden in the room is a dead man's dried hand, and white chicken feathers, and a cock with its throat cut, dying slowly, slowly, and its blood dripping into a bowl. I wasn't meant to know about obeh but I knew what I would find if I dared to look. x

TIA IS WATCHING ANTOINETTE. ② *white wigger*

TIA: (SINGS) GO AWAY WHITE COCKROACH  
GO AWAY, GO AWAY,  
NOBODY WANT YOU,  
GO AWAY, GO AWAY.

① ~~Antoinette~~  
~~MOTHER:~~

~~Never look at any strange negro that's what my mother says~~  
~~We are married, what will become of us?~~

ANTOINETTE: These were all the people in my life. My mother and my brother Pierre who staggered when he walked; and Christophine who was given to my mother as a present, and ~~Sass who had left us.~~ And our green parrot Coco who didn't talk very well. He could say 'Qui est la?' and "Che Coco."

② ~~I never looked at any strange negro. They hated us.~~

TIA: (SINGS) GO AWAY WHITE COCKROACH  
GO AWAY, GO AWAY,  
NOBODY WANT YOU,  
GO AWAY, GO AWAY.

ANTOINETTE: ~~But one day Tia was in our kitchen. And soon she was my friend.~~

~~TIA AND ANTOINETTE CHASE EACH OTHER AROUND. THEY STOP BY THE POOL AND TAKE OFF THEIR DRESSES TO GO SWIMMING. SOME MONEY FALLS FROM ANTOINETTE'S POCKET. TIA POUNCES ON IT.~~

TIA: Bet you three pennies you can't keep your head under water.

ANTOINETTE: I don't want to bet.

TIA: That's because you can't do it. I never seen you do it. Only talk. Bet you three pennies.

ANTOINETTE: I can do it.

TIA: You frightened?

ANTOINETTE: No.

TIA: You frightened?

ANTOINETTE: ②a Bet you all the money I can.

③ ANTOINETTE HOLDS HER HEAD UNDER THE WATER. SHE COMES UP CHOKING.

ANTOINETTE: I did it!

TIA: It certainly look like you drown dead that time.

TIA TAKES THE MONEY.

ANTOINETTE: But I did it! I did it!

TIA: *Antoinette didn't* You didn't do it good, and pennies don't buy much.  
Why you look at me like that? Pennies don't buy much.

ANTOINETTE: *A give me my money*  
*T my money now, you didn't do it good.* Keep ~~them~~ you cheating nigger. I can get more if I want to.

TIA: That not what I hear. All you poor like beggar.  
You eat salt fish. No money for fresh fish. Plenty  
real white people in Jamaica, they got gold money.  
But they don't come near you, nobody see them near you.  
Old time white people nothing but white nigger now, and  
black nigger better than white nigger.

*Antoinette What's your name?*  
*Tia Tia!*  
TIA GRABS ANTOINETTE'S DRESS. ~~THEY CHASE EACH OTHER ABOUT, GIGGLING,~~  
PUT ON EACH OTHERS' DRESSES, ~~EXAMINE EACH OTHER IN THEIR NEW CLOTHES.~~  
FOR A MOMENT THERE IS A MIRROR IMAGE. *Tia sings*  
~~TIA PULLS HER SKIRT OVER HER HEAD, ANTOINETTE COPIES HER.~~ *Miss Lucy.*  
THEY JUMP ONTO THE BED. THE GAME IS GETTING MORE GIGGLY. MORE PHYSICAL.  
THEY ROLL ON THE BED, TICKLING EACH OTHER.

MOTHER: (V/O) Antoinette. What are you doing? Stop that!  
And get that dirty little girl out of my bed!

THEY GET UP, TIA IS GIGGLING.

MOTHER: Your dress is even filthier than usual.

ANTOINETTE: It's Tia's dress.

MOTHER: Which one is Tia? Why are you wearing her dress.

TIA GIGGLES.

MOTHER: Christophine! Christophine! Where is Antoinette's dress? She must have a clean dress. Throw that disgusting thing away. Burn it.

ANTOINETTE: (TO TIA) Go away. Just go away! (TIA MOVES AWAY) ①

CHRISTOPHINE: She have no clean dress. She got two dresses, one wash and one wear.

MOTHER: ~~She must have another dress. She can't wear that. Find one. We have visitors.~~

CHRISTOPHINE: You want clean dress to drop from Heaven? Some people crazy in truth.

MOTHER: She has an old muslin dress. Find that. <sup>we have visitors</sup> And take that string out of her hair.

CHRISTOPHINE: ② Trouble walk in this house this day. Trouble. It shameful. The child she run wild. She grow up worthless and nobody care. .

③  
ANTOINETTE STANDS LOOKING AT HERSELF IN THE MIRROR.

ANTOINETTE: She is ashamed of me. What Tia said is true.

③ THE RED ROOM

JANE HAS LEFT THE 'WINDOW SEAT' AND IS STANDING LOOKING AT HERSELF IN ANOTHER MIRROR. SHE CLUTCHES HER NOTEBOOK.

JANE: The red room, when they locked me in there, was not my favourite place. The room was chill because it seldom had a fire; silent, because remote from the life of the kitchen and nursery; solemn, because it was so seldom entered. There was a secret compartment in the wardrobe. I wasn't meant to know of it, but I knew what I would find there if I dared to look; a picture of a dead man. Nine years ago in this room his body was washed and shrouded, and from this room his coffin was carried. But I didn't doubt that his spirit remained, and might quit his abode in vault or graveyard, and rise up before me in this chamber.



JANE: ① My reflection offered me little comfort in my prison. All looked colder and darker in that visionary hollow than in reality. The strange little figure there gazing at me with white face and arms speckling the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still had the effect of a phantom spirit. ②

A LIGHT FLICKERS ACROSS THE MIRROR. JANE SCREAMS

MRS REED (V/O): Silence. This violence is repulsive.

JANE: Unjust. Unjust.

(SINGS) WHY DID THEY SEND ME SO FAR AND SO LONELY  
UP WHERE THE MOORS SPREAD AND GREY ROCKS ARE PILED?  
MEN ARE HARD HEARTED AND KIND ANGELS ONLY  
WATCH O'ER THE STEPS OF THE POOR ORPHAN CHILD.

YET DISTANT AND SOFT THE NIGHT BREEZE IS BLOWING  
CLOUDS THERE ARE NONE, AND CLEAR STARS BEAM MILD.  
GOD IN HIS MERCY PROTECTION IS SHOWING,  
COMFORT AND HOPE TO THE POOR ORPHAN CHILD.

THERE IS A THOUGHT THAT FOR STRENGTH SHOULD AVAIL ME,  
THOUGH BOTH OF SHELTER AND KINDRED DESPOILED,  
HEAVEN IS A HOME AND A REST WILL NOT FAIL ME;  
GOD IS A FRIEND TO THE POOR ORPHAN CHILD. ②

ANTOINETTE KISSES HER REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR.  
CHRISTOPHINE JOINS HER AND DRESSES ANTOINETTE IN A NEW DRESS. ③ *white cockroach she nary*

CHRISTOPHINE: Glorious Emancipation. I got to laugh. These new English who come they worse than before. Worse than slavery. They got letter of the law. They got magistrate, they got fine. They got jail house and chain gang to mash up people's feet. The old people spit in their face if they see how they look at you, but they gone now.

(SINGS) GLORY DEAD WHEN WHITE MAN COME  
GLORY DEAD WHEN WHITE MAN COME  
GLORY DEAD WHEN BUCKRA COME  
GLORY DEAD, GLORY DEAD.

ANTOINETTE: Why have I got a new dress?

CHRISTOPHINE: Your mother is going to be married. ③

SOUND OF LAUGHING, WHISPERING VOICES, WHICH GRADUALLY BECOMES IDENTIFIABLE AS THE GOSSIPS' VOICES.

TIA: (sings)        THE WHITE COCKROACH SHE MARRY  
                      THE WHITE COCKROACH SHE MARRY  
                      THE WHITE COCKROACH SHE BUY, YOUNG MAN  
                      THE WHITE COCKROACH SHE MARRY.

ANTOINETTE DANCES, CLUTCHING A PICTURE, A SENTIMENTAL IMAGE OF A BLOND GIRL, 'THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.' SHE KISSES IT. TIA STARTS TO CHASE HER, TAUNTING HER WITH THE SONG. ANTOINETTE CLINGS TO THE PICTURE. TIA TRIES TO GRAB IT.

ANTOINETTE:        *Give me back my picture*  
~~Don't touch it! It's mine!~~

TIA GETS THE PICTURE. ANTOINETTE GRABS IT BACK FROM HER AND SMASHES IT.

*Antoinette Give it to me it's mine*

TIA:                What you want to do that for?

ANTOINETTE:        Go away. Just go away!

TIA:                ~~What you want to break it up for?~~

ANTOINETTE:        Go away!

TIA TRIES TO PICK UP SOME OF THE PIECES.

ANTOINETTE:        ~~Don't touch it! It's mine!~~

TIA:                *But* It smashed up now.

ANTOINETTE:        Keep your dirty hands off it! It's mine.

TIA:                What you so afraid of?

ANTOINETTE:        Go away! Just go away!

TIA: (SINGS)        GO AWAY WHITE COCKROACH,  
                      GO AWAY, GO AWAY .....

UNDERNEATH THIS THE GOSSIPS HAVE BECOME AUDIBLE.

VOICE ONE: A fantastic marriage and he will regret it.  
Why should a very wealthy man who can take his pick of  
all the girls in the West Indies, and many in England too,  
probably...

VOICE TWO: Why probably - certainly.

VOICE ONE: Why should he marry a widow without a penny to her name  
and Coulibri a wreck of a place...?

VOICE TWO: But Annette is such a pretty woman, and what a dancer...

VOICE ONE: He didn't come to the West Indies to dance. He came to  
make money like they all do...

VOICE TWO: And as for the <sup>girl</sup>~~children - the boy an idiot~~ kept out of  
sight, and the girl going the same way in my opinion -  
such a lowering expression...

Ⓒ ANTOINETTE RUNS AND HIDES BY THE POOL. RECITES HER 'CATECHISM':

ANTOINETTE: If the razor grass cuts my legs it's better than people.  
And if the ants bite me, red ants and black ants and white  
ants, its better than people.  
And if I see a snake its better than people.

Watch the red and yellow flowers in the sun and think of  
nothing.  
Think of nothing and a door opens and I am somewhere else,  
something else.  
Not myself any longer. *repeat*

THE SOUND BUILDS TO THE CRACKLING OF A FIRE. ANTOINETTE BECOMES FRIGHTENED.  
JANE, SITTING IN THE WINDOW SEAT, WRITES FURIOUSLY IN HER NOTEBOOK.  
HER SONG OVER LAPS WITH THIS SEQUENCE

JANE: (sings) WHY DID THEY SEND ME SO FAR AND SO LONELY  
UP WHERE THE MOORS SPREAD AND GREY ROCKS ARE PILED?  
MEN ARE HARD HEARTED AND KIND ANGELS ONLY  
WATCH O'ER THE STEPS OF THE POOR ORPHAN CHILD.

*During - Tia "Black English woman... while nigger"*

① TIA IS STANDING AT A DISTANCE WATCHING ANTOINETTE. ANTOINETTE RUNS TO HER. TIA THROWS THE STONE. THEY STAND FACING EACH OTHER. ~~TIA SPITS ON HER HAND, SMEARS IT ON ANTOINETTE'S FACE LEAVING A SMEAR OF BLOOD.~~ TIA GOES.

ANTOINETTE: Don't leave me!

CHRISTOPHINE PUTS ANTOINETTE TO BED, SITS BY HER.  
JANE'S FIRST DREAM IS HEARD.  
DURING THE DREAM JANE COMES AND GETS INTO BED WITH ANTOINETTE.

JANE: (V/O) I dreamed that I woke one night, and knew that my friend was dying. I rose softly, and went in search of her. She was in a remote room, but in my dream I knew the way, and although it was night the house was quite light, like day. I dreaded being discovered and sent back. I knew I must see my friend in case she died. I reached a door and light shone through the keyhole; inside was a crib. I could see a figure under the clothes, but the face was hidden by a sheet, and I could not pull it back, could not look, for fear that I would see not my friend, but a corpse. 'Are you awake?' I whispered through the sheet, 'Are you awake?' And the corpse pulled back the sheet, and I saw her face, so little changed that I thought she is not going to die they are mistaken. I got onto her crib and kissed her and she was cold but she smiled. 'Have you come to say goodbye?' she said, and I asked her where she was going. 'I am going to God,' she said, 'God loves me.' and I said 'I love you,' and she said 'Jane you think too much of the love of other people.' And I clasped my arms around her, so that she couldn't go, and I thought 'She won't go now.' And I said, 'Are you happy?' And she said, 'Yes, I am very happy.' And I lay with my arms round her neck, very happy because her breath was warm on my cheek.

And then she was cold, so cold, and there was no breath on my cheek, and I was lying with my arms around my friend's neck but she was a corpse, and I was screaming. And then I dreamt I was being pulled off her, and I was still screaming, and I was being carried down a corridor in someone's arms. And I woke up and I was being carried down a corridor in someone's arms, and I tried to wake up properly, and be back in my own bed, but I was being carried down a corridor in someone's arms and it wasn't a dream it was true.

ANTOINETTE SITS UP IN BED. CHRISTOPHINE IS WITH HER.

ANTOINETTE: <sup>Where am I?</sup>  
~~I thought my hair was a snake. What has happened to me?~~

CHRISTOPHINE: Hush doudou che. You mustn't worry. You have been ill.  
But you mustn't worry.

ANTOINETTE: I didn't know where I was.

CHRISTOPHINE: You know now don't you, doudou.

ANTOINETTE: Yes. Not at Coulibri.

CHRISTOPHINE: They burnt Coulibri, dou dou.

ANTOINETTE: Where is my mother?

CHRISTOPHINE: Your mother is getting well. You will see her very soon.

ANTOINETTE: Did I hear her screaming?

CHRISTOPHINE SAYS NOTHING.

ANTOINETTE: Sing to me.

CHRISTOPHINE: I DREAMT ABOUT JUDAS,  
LAST NIGHT, LAST NIGHT  
I DREAMT ABOUT JUDAS  
KISSING

I DREAMT ABOUT TREES,  
LAST NIGHT, LAST NIGHT.  
I DREAMT ABOUT TREES  
WATCHING

I DREAMT ABOUT GOD,  
LONG NIGHT, LOST NIGHT  
I DREAMT ABOUT GOD  
WEEPING

OH I DREAMT ABOUT JESUS, AND I DREAMT ABOUT JUDAS  
LONG NIGHT, LOST NIGHT  
I DREAMT ABOUT JESUS AND I DREAMT ABOUT JUDAS  
WEEPING

ANTOINETTE: And Tia? When can I see Tia?

CHRISTOPHINE: Tia is gone dou dou. You don't want to see her again.

ANTOINETTE: When my hair grows back, will it be lighter?

CHRISTOPHINE: No 'doudou, darker. Beautiful dark hair.

ANTOINETTE: I hoped it would be lighter, ~~very~~ ~~don~~.  
Will I have a mark on my forehead?

CHRISTOPHINE: It heal well. It won't spoil you on your wedding day.

CHRISTOPHINE DRESSES ANTOINETTE IN HER WEDDING DRESS.

TIA: This was the second time I had my dream.  
Again I am walking towards the forest, following the man who hates me, and he is a long way ahead of me, so it is hard for me to keep up. I am wearing a long dress and thin slippers so I walk with difficulty, following the man who is with me, and holding up the skirt of my dress. It is white and beautiful, and I don't wish to get it soiled. I follow the man, sick with fear, but I make no effort to save myself; if anyone were to try to save me I would refuse. This must happen.  
Now we have reached the forest. We are under the tall dark trees and there is no wind. 'Here?' I ask. He turns and looks at me, his face black with hatred, and when I see this I begin to cry. He smiles, slyly. 'Not here, not yet' he says, and I follow him, weeping. Now I do not try to hold up my dress. It trails in the dirt, my beautiful dress. We are no longer in the forest, but in an enclosed garden surrounded by a stone wall, and the trees are different trees. I do not know them. There are steps leading upwards. It is too dark to see the wall or the steps but I know they are there and I think, 'It will be when I go up these steps. At the top.' I stumble over my dress and cannot get up. I touch a tree and my arms hold onto it. 'Here, here.' he says. But I think I will not go any further. The tree sways and jerks as if it is trying to throw me off. Still I cling and the seconds pass and each one is a thousand years. 'Here. In here.' a strange voice says, and the tree stops swaying and jerking.

③ Monday noon - 21

① THE FIRST WEDDING

ROCHESTER AND ANTOINETTE STAND AS IF AT THE ALTAR. THEY SPEAK WITHOUT LOOKING AT EACH OTHER. ANTOINETTE IS IN HER WEDDING DRESS. TIA SHADOWS ANTOINETTE, WEARING ANTOINETTE'S CHILDHOOD DRESS.

ROCHESTER: You don't wish to marry me?

○ ANTOINETTE: No.

ROCHESTER: Why not?

○ ANTOINETTE: I am afraid of what may happen.

ROCHESTER: When you are my wife there will not be any reason to be afraid.

○ ANTOINETTE: I am afraid because you don't know anything about me.

ROCHESTER: There is no reason to be afraid.  
Don't you remember that? I told you that last night.

○ ANTOINETTE: Can you give me peace?

ROCHESTER: ② I'll trust you if you trust me. Is that a bargain? ③

○ ANTOINETTE: Such a long time until it's over.

ROCHESTER: You will make me very unhappy if you send me away without telling me what I have done to displease you. I will go with a sad heart. ④

○ ANTOINETTE: Your sad heart.

HE MOVES AWAY. ⑤

ANTOINETTE:

*Insert over*

At school we were taught to offer up all the prayers, all the works, all the sufferings of the day. But what about happiness I thought. And I thought, it doesn't matter.

ROCHESTER: Dear Father,  
 The thirty thousand pounds have been paid to me without question or condition. I have a modest competence now. I will never be a disgrace to you or to my dear brother, the son you love. No begging letters, no mean requests. None of the furtive shabby manouvres of a younger son. I have sold my soul or you have sold it, and after all, is it such a bad bargain? The girl is thought to be beautiful — she is beautiful....  
 I have been in Jamaica for a month, and for three weeks of that time I was in bed with fever.  
 And the woman is a stranger.

*Insert A's speech : Page 12*

② THE WEDDING NIGHT

THE BEDROOM, FULL OF FLOWERS AND CANDLES WHICH CHRISTOPHINE HAS BEEN PREPARING. WINE AND GLASSES. TWO WREATHS ON THE BED.

ANTOINETTE: This is my home — our home now. Don't you like it here?  
 I want you to be happy.

ROCHESTER: I want us to be happy. (HE TOASTS) To happiness.

ANTOINETTE: To happiness. (THEY DRINK)

ROCHESTER: What are all the flowers for?

ANTOINETTE: To make you welcome. Don't you like them?

ROCHESTER: (PICKS UP A WREATH) Am I expected to wear one of these?

ANTOINETTE: Yes, both of us. Together.

③ THEY PUT ON THE WREATHS. STAND LOOKING AT THEMSELVES IN THE MIRROR.

ROCHESTER: I hardly think it suits my handsome face. Do you?

ANTOINETTE: You look like a king, an emperor.

ROCHESTER: God forbid.



ANTOINETTE: (SHE TOASTS) To happiness.

ROCHESTER: To happiness. (THEY DRINK)

ANTOINETTE: There used to be a hammock here - out here on the verandah, and I used to lie in it when I was a child and it was too hot to sleep. And Christophine would be angry with me. She said it was very bad to sleep in the moonlight when the moon was full. Do you think that too? That I have slept too long in the moonlight?

ROCHESTER: I think you belong in the moonlight.  
~~'With how sad steps, oh moon...'~~

ANTOINETTE: ~~What's that?~~

ROCHESTER: ~~A poem.~~

ANTOINETTE: I used to be so afraid sometimes.

ROCHESTER: Of what?

OA *I'm afraid because you don't know anything about me.*  
ANTOINETTE: Of everything.

ROCHESTER: No fears tonight. No sad stories.

ANTOINETTE: I'm not sad. Only sometimes things happen and are there for always. Even though you don't know why.

OA *Can you give me peace?*  
ROCHESTER: I want you to be happy with me, Antoinette. Will you be happy? Make my happiness, and I will make yours. No more sad hearts. (HE TOASTS) To happiness.

ANTOINETTE: To making happiness.

③ MORNING SUNLIGHT. ANTOINETTE AND ROCHESTER ARE IN BED.  
CHRISTOPHINE BRINGS THEM COFFEE.  
TIA WATCHES, ANTOINETTE IS NOW AWARE OF HER.

CHRISTOPHINE: Taste my bull's blood, master. Not horse piss like the English madams drink. I know them. Drink, drink, their yellow horse piss, talk, talk, their lying talk.

I send the girl to clear up the mess you make with the frangipani, or we get cockroach in the house. Take care not to slip on the flowers young master.

ROCHESTER: Her coffee is delicious but her language is horrible. And she might hold her dress up. It must get very dirty, yards of it trailing on the floor.

TIA GIGGLES.

ANTOINETTE: When they don't hold their dress up it's a mark of respect. Or for feast days, or going to mass.

ROCHESTER: And is this a feast day?

ANTOINETTE: She wanted it to be.

ROCHESTER: Whatever the reason it is not a clean habit.

ANTOINETTE: It is. You don't understand at all. They don't care about getting a dress dirty, because it shows it isn't the only dress they've got. Don't you like Christophine?

ROCHESTER: She is a very worthy person, no doubt. Why do you hug and kiss her?

ANTOINETTE: Why not?

ROCHESTER: I couldn't. ②

ANTOINETTE: I think I won't get up this morning.

ROCHESTER: Not get up? Not get up at all?

ANTOINETTE: No - I'll get up when I want to. I'm very lazy you know.  
I often stay in bed all day.

ROCHESTER GETS UP. HE IS ADRIFT, GETTING IN THE WAY OF CHRISTOPHINE WORKING. TIA IS WATCHING HIM. EVENTUALLY HE SETTLES HIMSELF DOWN TO WRITE A LETTER. CHRISTOPHINE SWEEPS UNDER HIS FEET.

CHRISTOPHINE: Sorry to disturb you young master. I have to clean up this mess you make with the flowers.

TIA: (SINGS) GO AWAY WHITE COCKROACH,  
GO, AWAY, GO AWAY,  
NOBODY WANT YOU,  
GO AWAY, GO AWAY.

ROCHESTER MOVES AWAY, SETTLES BY THE POOL

ROCHESTER: Dear Father,  
We have arrived from Jamaica after an uncomfortable few days. The estate, Granbois, is part of the family property and my wife is very much attached to it. It comprises some two hundred acres...

(Too much of everything. Too much blue. Too much purple, too much red. The mountains too high, the hills too near.)

The estate is very beautiful, but my illness has left me too weak to appreciate it fully.

(Watching the red and yellow flowers in the sun, thinking of nothing it is as if a door opens, and I am somewhere else, someone else. Not myself any longer.)

ANTOINETTE HAS GOT UP, SHE SITS AT THE MIRROR AND STARTS TO DO HER HAIR.  
CHRISTOPHINE COMES TO HELP HER.

ANTOINETTE: Don't put scent on my hair. He doesn't like it.

CHRISTOPHINE: The man don't like scent. I never hear that before.

ANTOINETTE: Well he doesn't.

TIA HAS BECOME HER REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR.

TIA: (SINGS) THE WHITE COCKROACH SHE MARRY,  
THE WHITE COCKROACH SHE MARRY,  
THE WHITE COCKRAOCH SHE BUY YOUNG MAN,  
THE WHITE COCKROACH SHE MARRY.

You frightened?

②

ANTOINETTE SMOOTHS HER HAIR DOWN.

○

④ THE BOUNDARY.

ANTOINETTE JOINS ROCHESTER AT THE POOL

ANTOINETTE: ~~This is the boundary of Granbois.~~

ROCHESTER: ~~The High Woods I suppose.~~

ANTOINETTE: Taste. This is mountain water.

ROCHESTER: It is good. Clean.

○

ANTOINETTE: The earth is red here, do you notice?

ROCHESTER: It is red in parts of England too.

ANTOINETTE: ~~Oh England, England.~~ I don't believe in England

ROCHESTER: ~~Why do you say it in that way? What do you mean?~~

ANTOINETTE: ~~mean~~ Because England is like a dream. One of my friends who married an Englishman wrote and told me so. She said 'This place London is like a cold dark dream sometimes. I want to wake up.'

ROCHESTER: Well that is precisely how your beautiful island seems to me. Quite unreal and like a dream.

ANTOINETTE: But how can rivers and mountains and the sea be unreal?

ROCHESTER: And how can millions of people, their houses and their streets be unreal?

ANTOINETTE: More easily. Much more easily. Yes, a big city must be like a dream. <sub>a</sub>

⑤ FIRST 'WEARING SEQUENCE'

THIS WILL BE REPEATED WITH ANTOINETTE WALKING TOWARDS ROCHESTER ALONG A PIECE OF CLOTH. HE PULLS IT OUT FROM UNDER HER, SHE FALLS. THIS TIME IT IS A GAME. HE CATCHES HER. THE TEXT IS A VOICE OVER.

ANTOINETTE: I am wearing my hair a new way tonight. Do you like it?

ROCHESTER: Yes, very much.

ANTOINETTE: I'll wear the dress you like tonight shall I?

ROCHESTER: Yes, do wear it.

ANTOINETTE: Will you be pleased?

ROCHESTER: Yes, very pleased.  
 z But it doesn't matter.

~~THEY DANCE TOGETHER.~~ MUSIC: "ALL OF ME"

⑥ Love in the dark.

NIGHT. ANTOINETTE AND ROCHESTER IN BED TOGETHER.  
HE IS ASLEEP. SHE IS WATCHING HIM.

ANTOINETTE: I never wished to live before I knew you. I always  
thought it would be better if I died.

ROCHESTER: Always this talk of death.

ANTOINETTE: Why did you make me want to live? Why did you do that to  
me?

TIA: Can you give me peace?

ROCHESTER: Because I wished it. Isn't that enough?

OR NO

ANTOINETTE: Yes, of course it is enough. <sup>a</sup> But what if one day you  
didn't wish it? Suppose you took this happiness away?  
I am not used to happiness, it makes me afraid.

TIA: ~~Make my happiness, I will make yours, you said. Trust me,~~  
~~you said. I'm afraid because you don't know anything~~  
~~about me.~~

ROCHESTER: Never be afraid. Or if you are, tell no one.

ANTOINETTE: But I am afraid. You don't know anything about me.

TIA: You don't know anything about me.

ROCHESTER: Ssh - not now. No sad stories now.  
What would make you happy?

ANTOINETTE: If I could die. Now, when I am happy. <sup>⑥</sup>  
Would you do that? <sup>c</sup> You wouldn't have to kill me.  
Say die and I will die.

ROCHESTER: Always this talk of death.

ANTOINETTE: Say die and watch me die.

ROCHESTER: Die then. Die.

③ THEY MAKE LOVE. MUSIC. "THE NEARNESS OF YOU".  
ROCHESTER GETS UP AND WASHES. TIA COMES TO ANTOINETTE.

ROCHESTER: I watched her die many times. In my way, not in hers.  
In sunlight, in shadow, by moonlight, by candlelight. In  
the long afternoons when the house was empty.  
And the woman is a stranger. I want what she hides.

TIA: He doesn't know anything about me.

ANTOINETTE: Better not to tell people things. Better not to try.  
To wake up one morning and be alone.  
Better a mouthful of stones than an empty bed.

⑤ ROCHESTER COMES BACK TO BED. SHE TOUCHES HIM. HE HOLDS HER HAND STILL.

<sup>Ant 1</sup>  
~~TIA~~: (SINGS) HERE THE WIND SAYS IT HAS BEEN, IT HAS BEEN  
AND THE SEA SAYS IT MUST BE, IT MUST BE  
AND THE SUN SAYS IT CAN BE IT WILL BE....

ROCHESTER: And the rain?

ANTOINETTE: 2 You must listen to the rain. Our rain knows all the  
songs.

ROCHESTER: <sup>what about</sup> ~~And~~ all the secrets? <sup>what about</sup> All the tears?

ANTOINETTE: 2 All, all, all.

~~TIA~~: <sup>Ant 1</sup> You said you would give me peace.

ROCHESTER: Shut your eyes. You are safe. Shut your eyes. Rest.

HE HOLDS HER. SHE CLINGS TO HIM.

TIA sings: BLOT OUT THE MOON, PULL DOWN THE STARS  
LOVE IN THE DARK, FOR WE'RE IN THE DARK  
SO SOON, SO SOON.

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① THINKING OF ENGLAND

ANTOINETTE SITS AT THE MIRROR. CHRISTOPHINE IS DOING HER HAIR.

ANTOINETTE: Don't put scent on my hair. *I don't like it*

CHRISTOPHINE: *You mean*  
He don't like it.

ANTOINETTE: ~~I don't like it.~~  
Things are different in England.

CHRISTOPHINE: You think there is such a place?

ANTOINETTE: You know there is.

CHRISTOPHINE: I never see the damn place. How I know?

ANTOINETTE: There's a lot of things you've never seen. Just because you've never seen them doesn't mean they don't exist. I've seen England in an atlas. It's pink. He comes from Yorkshire. He showed me. The Yorkshire Wolds. I think a wold is like a hill. It snows there he says - ~~like feathers falling, torn bits of paper falling,~~ like ash. And he says trees loose their leaves in winter. Things change there he says. Things look different.

CHRISTOPHINE: Things look very different when you a poor person in England, I know that. I hear England a cold, thief place. It cold to freeze your bones and they take your money. Look away - paf - no money.

ANTOINETTE: Well that won't worry me. I don't have any money.

CHRISTOPHINE: A rich white girl like you don't have any money?

ANTOINETTE: No, it's his now.

CHRISTOPHINE: What's this you tell me?

ANTOINETTE: It's the English law.



CHRISTOPHINE: Like I say. England a cold thief place.

ANTOINETTE: You don't know anything. You said England doesn't exist.

CHRISTOPHINE: I hear things that all.

ANTOINETTE: Well that's not what he's told me.

CHRISTOPHINE: Don't you know better than to believe everything you're told?

SILENCE. CHRISTOPHINE IS FINISHING OFF HER HAIR.

ANTOINETTE: Leave it, leave me alone! I'll do it. I know how he likes it. (CHRISTOPHINE LEAVES) And pick your dress up out of the dirt!

TIA HAS BECOME ANTOINETTE'S REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR.

TIA: Plenty real white people in Jamaica, they got gold money, but you poor like beggar. Old time white people nothing but white nigger now, and black nigger better than white nigger. You frightened? You frightened?

ANTOINETTE: No. No! Go away!

② SECOND 'WEARING SEQUENCE.' TIA SINGS WHITE COCKROACH.

ANTOINETTE: I am wearing my dress a new way tonight. Do you like it?

ROCHESTER: Yes, very much.

ANTOINETTE: I'll wear the scent you like tonight shall I?

ROCHESTER: Yes, do wear it.

ANTOINETTE: Will you be pleased?

ROCHESTER: Yes, very pleased.  
But it doesn't matter.

① ANTOINETTE FALLS. ROCHESTER LEAVES HER ON THE FLOOR.

③ THE ROAD:  
CHRISTOPHINE LEAVING AN OFFERING BY THE POOL - FLOWERS AND FEATHERS.  
ROCHESTER WATCHES HER.

ROCHESTER: What are you doing?

CHRISTOPHINE IGNORES HIM.

ROCHESTER: What is that? Is that an offering for one of your  
dead people? One of your zombies?

CHRISTOPHINE SAYS NOTHING

ROCHESTER: Is that why people won't go up that road? Where does that  
road lead to?

CHRISTOPHINE: No road.

ROCHESTER: But I saw it. A paved road like the French made in the  
islands.

CHRISTOPHINE: No road.

ROCHESTER: Is there something wrong about the place?  
Is there a ghost there? A zombie? *back*

CHRISTOPHINE: I don't know nothing about that foolishness.

ROCHESTER: But there was a road here sometime.

CHRISTOPHINE: Why you asking me about this foolishness?  
It not for you. Not for beke.

ROCHESTER: I'm just curious. I've been reading a little about your customs. In a book. <sup>③</sup> And you hear people talk.

CHRISTOPHINE: People always talk. You don't want to believe everything they say.

ROCHESTER: ~~Where does the road lead to?~~ *But there was a road here sometime?*

CHRISTOPHINE: No road.

2

CHRISTOPHINE LEAVES. ROCHESTER IS LEFT.  
HE SITS DOWN TO READ A BOOK.

<sup>④</sup> *The white cockroach*

ANTOINETTE IN BED. DAY.

CHRISTOPHINE COMES TO HER. KISSES HER.

ANTOINETTE: You're not leaving?

CHRISTOPHINE: Yes.

ANTOINETTE: And what will become of me?

CHRISTOPHINE: Get up girl, and dress yourself. Woman must have spunks to live in this wicked world.

ANTOINETTE: You can't leave me!

CHRISTOPHINE: I see enough trouble. I have a right to my rest. Too besides the young master don't like me, and perhaps I don't like him so much. ~~If I stay here I bring trouble and bone of contention in your house.~~

ANTOINETTE: If you are not happy here then go.

CHRISTOPHINE: Be careful of yourself doudou.

ANTOINETTE: Just go!

^ TIA HOVERS BY ANTOINETTE, SINGING WHITE COCKROACH.

CHRISTOPHINE: Have spunks girl. Don't be frightened.

ANTOINETTE: Get out. Go! *cont. shouting*

\ ROCHESTER HAS APPEARED. HE WATCHES ANTOINETTE SCREAMING AT CHRISTOPHINE.

ANTOINETTE: Can you hear <sup>that song?</sup> ~~what she is singing~~? Can you hear that song? *birds fine leaves*

ROCHESTER SAYS NOTHING.

ANTOINETTE: It's the song about a white cockroach. That's me. That's what they call all of us who were here before their own people in Africa sold them to the slave traders. And I've heard English women call us white niggers. So between you I often wonder who I am and where is my country and where do I belong and why was I ever born at all.

Will you go now please. I have to get dressed like Christophine said.

*Rochester*  
*Antoinette*  
② ROCHESTER GOES BACK TO HIS BOOK. *As you wish Bertha*  
*Why are you calling her Bertha? anyone's got Bertha.*  
ANTOINETTE GETS UP. LOOKS IN MIRROR.

TIA: You frightened?

ANTOINETTE: Go away. *cont.*

TIA: You frightened?

ANTOINETTE: ~~Yes.~~ Yes.

ANTOINETTE SMEARS WHITE POWDER ON HER FACE

THIRD WEARING SEQUENCE. TIA SINGS 'ALL OF ME'

ANTOINETTE: I am wearing my scent a new way tonight. Do you like it?

ROCHESTER: Yes, very much.

ANTOINETTE: I'll wear the face you like tonight shall I?

ROCHESTER: Yes, do wear it.

ANTOINETTE: Will you be pleased?

ROCHESTER: Yes, very pleased.  
But it doesn't matter.

ANTOINETTE FALLS HARDER THIS TIME. SHE CANNOT GET UP.  
CHRISTOPHINE COMES TO HER, CARRYING HER THINGS.

ANTOINETTE: Help me, Christophine.  
Christophine! Help me Pheena! Help me!

CHRISTOPHINE: If the man don't love you, you can't make him love you.  
You can make him come to your bed, but you can't make him  
love you. And after he hate you. It will be worse.

ANTOINETTE: He hates me now. It cannot be worse. He knows something.  
He knows something about me mother. He knows her name.  
He has started calling me by her name. Help me. Make him  
love me. I know you can.

CHRISTOPHINE: Obeah too strong for you. It will break you up.  
Too strong for beke.

ANTOINETTE: Help me.

CHRISTOPHINE: Talk to him.

ANTOINETTE: I have been unhappy for too long. It cannot last, this  
unhappiness. It will kill me.

CHRISTOPHINE: He not a bad man, but he a weak man. He hear stories. He so mix up he not know what to believe. You must talk to him. Tell him the truth about your mother. About yourself. Not lies.

ANTOINETTE: Better to lie, quiet and still. Better not to try.

CHRISTOPHINE: Talk to him.

ANTOINETTE: I will try.  
Please help me. (OFFERS HER MONEY)

CHRISTOPHINE: You keep your money. You pay a high price for this love already.

SHE GIVES ANTOINETTE SOME WHITE POWDER.

ANTOINETTE 2: You frightened?

ANTOINETTE: Yes.

(7) OBEAH NIGHT.

ROCHESTER IS SITTING DRINKING. ANTOINETTE MAKES A CIRCLE ROUND THE BED WITH THE POWDER CHRISTOPHINE HAS GIVEN HER. SHE GOES TO SIT WITH ROCHESTER. HE IS ALREADY DRUNK. ANTOINETTE DRINKS FAST TO CATCH UP.

ANTOINETTE: I must tell you the truth about myself. Not lies.

ROCHESTER: Not tonight. Some other time.

ANTOINETTE: I might not be able to tell you another time.

ANTOINETTE 2: You frightened?

ROCHESTER: Tell me tomorrow. In the light.

ANTOINETTE: Not tomorrow. Not another time. I must tell you now.

ANTOINETTE 2: You frightened?

ROCHESTER: How do I know you will tell me the truth?  
You told me your mother died a long time ago.  
That wasn't true, was it?

ANTOINETTE: There are always two deaths. The real one, and the one  
people know about.

ROCHESTER: I had a letter. <sup>(2)</sup>

ANTOINETTE: I know what they told you. That my mother was mad, and an  
infamous woman, and that I am a mad girl too.

ROCHESTER: Don't talk about it tonight.

ANTOINETTE: I must talk about it. I don't want to be frightened any  
longer

ANTOINETTE 2: You frightened?

ROCHESTER: Always this talk of fear.

ANTOINETTE: When I was a child I used to see my mother look in the  
mirror and wish that she was someone else. I used to wish  
that too.

ANTOINETTE 2: Watch the red and yellow flowers in the sun and a door  
opens, and I am somewhere else, something else. Not  
myself any longer.

ANTOINETTE: I was <sup>so</sup> alone. So alone. And then Tia came.

ANTOINETTE 2: And then my mother saw that I was growing up like a white  
nigger, <sup>and she was ashamed of me</sup> and after that everything changed. She married Mr  
Mason, and there was a fire at Coulibri, they burnt down  
our home.

ANTOINETTE: And Coco, our parrot, was sitting on the roof of the  
glacis calling 'Qui est la? Qui est la?' and he  
couldn't fly, because Mr Mason had clipped his wings, and  
he fell burning, little bits of ash in the sky like snow,  
but the sky was red. And I knew I would never see  
Coulibri again, and then I saw Tia, and I ran to her

because she was all that was left of my life, and as I ran I thought I will live with Tia and be like her, and I saw the stone in her hand but I didn't see her throw it.

ANTOINETTE 2: And we stood. Tears on her face. Blood on mine.  
It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking glass.

ROCHESTER: Don't think about sad things and nothing will be spoiled I promise you.

ANTOINETTE: That's a lie. Christophine said the scar wouldn't spoil me on my wedding day, but it did spoil it, and all the other days and nights to come. And you said that when I was your wife there wouldn't be any reason to be afraid, but that was just a lie too because I have been more afraid than ever.

ROCHESTER: When did I say that?

ANTOINETTE 2: You did say it.

ROCHESTER: I'm not saying I didn't. I'm only asking you when.

ANTOINETTE: I remember you said it.

ANTOINETTE 2: I am not a forgetting person.

ROCHESTER: I'm sure I did then. But that was before.

ANTOINETTE 2: And is it different now?

ROCHESTER: It doesn't have to be. But you must try to forget.

ANTOINETTE: I don't want to forget. Mr Mason said he loved my mother, but after the fire he went away and I think he forgot her quite quickly.

ANTOINETTE 2: I am not a forgetting person.



ANTOINETTE:

And after the fire my mother forgot me. So I went to see her. No one knew. I heard her crying before I reached the house. I thought 'I will kill anyone who is hurting my mother.' ~~X~~I remember the dress she was wearing, an evening dress cut very low and she was barefoot, and a woman was watching her. There was a fat black man with a glass of rum in his hand. He said 'Come on, drink this and you will forget.'

~~OR~~ I am not a forgetting person.

She drank it and he gave her more and she drank it all and smashed the glass to pieces. 'Clean it up' the man said to the woman, 'or she walk in it.' 'If she walk in it damn good thing' the woman said, 'perhaps she keep quiet then.'

~~X~~My mother walked up and down on the glass for a long time, saying 'Qui est la? Qui est la?' and then she sat down and I saw the fat black man lift her up out of the chair and I saw ~~X~~his mouth fasten on hers and she went all limp and soft and he laughed. And the woman laughed too, the woman laughed at my mother, and I was so afraid because I had heard laughter like that before, all my life, and I knew I could never make them stop.

ROCHESTER:

~~We've been sitting here a long time. It's very late. You must go in.~~ *I think you should go in.*

ANTOINETTE:

Come to bed.

~~S~~ SHE KISSES HIM. HE DOESN'T RESPOND.

ANTOINETTE 2:

Your mouth is colder than my hands.

SHE TAKES SOME WINE IN HER MOUTH. KISSES HIM, DRIBBLING THE WINE INTO HIS MOUTH. HE CHOKES, DRIBBLING WINE DOWN HIS FACE. SHE SITS ON HIM, PINNING HIM TO THE CHAIR. SHE LICKS THE WINE OFF HIS FACE. PICKS UP THE BOTTLE. POURS SOME MORE INTO HIS MOUTH. HE LAUGHS, DOESN'T SWALLOW IT DELIBERATELY. IT RUNS DOWN HIS CHEST. SHE LICKS IT OFF, TAKING OFF HIS SHIRT. HE PICKS UP THE BOTTLE, POURS SOME OVER HER, TIPS THE REST ALL OVER HIS HEAD, OVER HIS FACE. IT GOES IN HIS EYES. HE TIPS HIS HEAD BACK, LAUGHING. HE KEEPS HIS EYES SHUT.

① The Divorce

① Bertha

MORNING LIGHT. HARSH.

~~TIA AND ANTOINETTE ARE SPRAWLED ON THE BED WITH ROCHESTER.~~

~~ANTOINETTE IS AWAKE. SHE LEANS OVER AND KISSES HIS EYES, VERY GENTLY.~~

② HE WAKES AND SEES TIA. HE RETCHES, GETS UP AND WASHES HIMSELF FRANTICALLY.  
HE COMES BACK TO THE BED.

HE PULLS THE SHEET OVER <sup>Bold</sup> TIA, LIKE COVERING A BODY.

LATE AFTERNOON.

THE 'BODY' UNDER THE SHEET SITS UP. IT IS ANTOINETTE. SHE REACHES FOR ROCHESTER.

ANTOINETTE: Better to have died. A second ago, when I was happy.  
Better not to breathe.  
Better to lie, very quiet and still.  
Better a mouthful of stones than an empty bed.  
When I woke up I was alone.

③ SHE WATCHES AS ANTOINETTE 2 GOES THROUGH THE 'WEARING SEQUENCE' WITH ROCHESTER. ~~SHE IS WEARING A RED DRESS, AND A GROTESQUE SMEAR OF MAKE UP.~~

ANTOINETTE 2: I am wearing my face a new way tonight. Do you like it?

ROCHESTER: No.

ANTOINETTE 2: I'll wear the name you like tonight shall I?

ROCHESTER: Yes, do wear it.

ANTOINETTE 2: Will you be pleased?

ROCHESTER: No. Not pleased.  
But it doesn't matter.

THE SHEET IS PULLED AWAY VERY VIOLENTLY. SHE FALLS. CANNOT GET UP.

AANTOINETTE 2: Why won't you touch me? Or kiss me? Or come near me?  
Do you think I can bear it? What reason do you have  
for treating me like this? Do you have a reason?

ROCHESTER: Yes I have a reason, Bertha. My God.

ANTOINETTE: Why are you calling me Bertha? My name is not Bertha.

THEY START DRINKING ② *Goodbye Antoinette*

ANTOINETTES: A BENKY FOOT AND A BENKY LEG  
(sings) AND CHARLIE OVER THE WATER  
CHARLIE, CHARLIE

ROCHESTER: What are you doing?

ANTOINETTES: CHARLIE, CHARLIE.

SHE PICKS UP A BOTTLE OF BRANDY FROM THE TABLE. DRINKS.

ROCHESTER: What are you doing? What are you wearing?

ANTOINETTE 2: A dress. My dress.

ROCHESTER: You look like a whore.

ANTOINETTE: That's what you like isn't it? Don't you like my whore's  
dress?

ROCHESTER: Stop this! Bertha stop this!

ANTOINETTE: Why are you calling me Bertha? Names matter!

ANTOINETTE 2 GOES TO KISS HIM. HE PUSHES HER AWAY.

ANTOINETTE: I thought you liked English girls, but that was just a lie  
like everything else wasn't it?

*Antoinette*  
*R I don't know what you're talking about*  
*B oh yes you do*

*You liked me last night.*

ANTOINETTE 2: You like the little black girls better.

ROCHESTER: I wasn't myself. I was sick. Ill. Your dirty poison.  
Your dirty nigger magic.

ANTOINETTE 2: *tried to make* You've ~~made~~ <sup>made</sup> me into someone else, *by you gave* giving me a new name.  
~~I know~~, that's obehah too!

ANTOINETTE: A BENKY FOOT AND A BENKY LEG  
AND CHARLIE OVER THE WATER  
CHARLIE, CHARLIE

ANTOINETTE 2: CHARLIE, CHARLIE.

ROCHESTER: You're drunk.  
Give me the bottle.

HE LUNGES FOR THE BOTTLE.

ANTOINETTE 2: Just touch me, and you'll see if I'm a damn coward like you are.

ANTOINETTE: *You damn Coward*  
~~Fuck you.~~ ~~Fuck you.~~

ROCHESTER: Bertha, please - Antoinette, then.

ANTOINETTE: Names matter! *Look at me!*

HE GRABS ANTOINETTE. TURNS HER TO LOOK AT ANTOINETTE 2

ROCHESTER: Look at yourself Bertha. ~~Just look at yourself.~~

ANTOINETTES: ~~Good-bye~~ Antoinette. ~~Goodbye~~ Antoinetta.

ANTOINETTE GOES.

BERTHA: Don't leave me.

*Bertha calls for Christophine*

ROCHESTER LUNGES FOR THE BOTTLE AGAIN. THEY FIGHT.  
HE EVENTUALLY OVERPOWERS HER, PINS HER ARMS BEHIND HER BACK, SITS HER ON A  
CHAIR. HOLDS HER ON TO IT, TRAPPED. HE USES A LOT OF FORCE.  
SHE SCREAMS FOR CHRISTOPHINE

BERTHA: I saw Antoinette drift out of the window.

ROCHESTER KISSES HER. SHE DOESN'T RESIST.  
VERY DELIBERATELY HE WIPES HIS MOUTH WITH HIS SLEEVE.

③ *Post mortem*

CHRISTOPHINE STANDS LOOKING AT ROCHESTER. HE CANNOT LOOK AT HER.  
HE LETS BERTHA GO. SHE GETS OUT OF THE CHAIR. FINDS HERSELF SOME MORE  
BRANDY, DRINKS

ROCHESTER: *got off her*  
*got out*  
~~I don't know what to do about my wife.~~ *She's*

CHRISTOPHINE: Your wife. You make me laugh. Everybody know that you  
marry her for her money. You take it all, and you make  
her think you can't see the sun for looking at you. *her*

ANTOINETTE: ~~BLOT OUT THE MOON, PULL DOWN THE STARS~~  
(SINGS) ~~LOVE IN THE DARK, FOR WE'RE IN THE DARK~~  
~~SO SOON, SO SOON.~~

CHRISTOPHINE: You make love to her till she drunk with it. Till she  
can't do without it. It's she can't see the sun anymore.  
Only you she see.

BERTHA: I belong in the dark.

ROCHESTER: I never asked for that.  
~~Too much of everything.~~

CHRISTOPHINE: So you leave her alone.

BERTHA: When I woke up I was alone.

CHRISTOPHINE: And you don't tell her why.

BERTHA: Why?

CHRISTOPHINE: No more love, eh?

ROCHESTER: No more love.

CHRISTOPHINE: Love her a little.

BERTHA: No more love.

ROCHESTER: She's a mad girl. She'll not care who she's loving.

CHRISTOPHINE: She love you so much. So much. She thirsty for you.

ROCHESTER: She thirsts for anyone - not for me. She gives herself as no sane woman would, or could. ~~Or could.~~

CHRISTOPHINE: You break her up. She love you and she give you all she have.

~~ANTOINETTE: ALL OF ME, WHY NOT TAKE ALL OF ME...~~

CHRISTOPHINE: Love her a little. That's all you can love. A little.

ROCHESTER: The woman is a stranger to me.

BERTHA: Trust me, you said. I want to make you happy.

ROCHESTER: When did I say that?

BERTHA: Trust me.

ROCHESTER: Trust you? How can I trust you?

BERTHA: I didn't mean that.

ROCHESTER: What did you mean? You don't know what you mean.

BERTHA: I do.

ROCHESTER: You don't. Lies. All lies. Two deaths. All lies.

BERTHA: ~~Goodbye Antoinette. Goodbye Antoinetta.~~ *I saw antoinette*  
~~You coward. You damned coward. Don't leave me.~~ *float out of the*  
*window.*

ANTOINETTE: ~~Antoinette. Marionette.~~  
~~Antoinetta. Marionetta.~~

CHRISTOPHINE: Hush yourself doudou. The man don't like it.  
 Have pity.

ROCHESTER: Pity. Is there none for me? Tied to a lunatic for life.  
 A drunken lying lunatic.

BERTHA: Do you think I have spent too long in the moonlight?

ROCHESTER: I'll watch for one tear. One human tear. Not that blank  
 hating moonstruck face.

BERTHA: The rain has all the tears.

~~ANTOINETTE: HERE THE WIND SAYS IT HAS BEEN, IT HAS BEEN....~~

CHRISTOPHINE: If you can't love her, let her go.  
 Maybe someone else can love her.

ROCHESTER: She'll have no lover. I don't want her and she'll have no  
 one else.

BERTHA: No other lover.

CHRISTOPHINE: I see it from the first. You young, but already you hard.  
 And she love you so much.

ROCHESTER: In her way. Not mine. And it's not enough. ~~All my life~~  
~~I will be thirsty for her and I hate her for it. I cannot~~  
~~love her. I hate her for that. Don't you understand? My~~  
*Christophine: I* love for her could never be enough.

~~CHRISTOPHINE GOES.~~

ROCHESTER: But my hate will be. ~~No more love~~  
~~My hate will be stronger, better. No more loving. No~~  
~~more false heavens. If this is hell let it be hell.~~  
~~She~~ You hate me and I hate <sup>her</sup> you and we'll see who hates best.

BERTHA SPITS AT HIS FACE. ANTOINETTE APPEARS TO ROCHESTER.  
 SHE FALLS OVER, AS IF HE WAS PULLING THE SHEET. GETS UP. FALLS AGAIN.

*Christophine Exits.*

ROCHESTER: Forgive me. I have made a terrible mistake.

ROCHESTER (V/O): And I drew a house, surrounded by trees. A large house.  
 I divided the third floor into rooms and in one room I  
 drew a standing woman. A child's scribble. A dot for a  
 head, ~~a larger one for the body, a triangle for the skirt.~~  
 Slanting lines for arms and feet. English trees. And it  
 was an English house.

JANE HAS COME TO STAND BY, ROCHESTER, CARRYING A CASE.  
 HE DOESN'T SEE HER.

JANE: Can I help you, sir?

*Interval.*



E The New Grovers 1872

PART TWO.

① The homecoming

THORNFIELD. COLD DAYLIGHT.

THE FURNITURE IS REARRANGED TO FORM A 'PARLOUR' AREA, AND A BEDROOM AREA FOR JANE. BERTHA IS NOW IN THE 'ATTIC' ON A HIGHER LEVEL.

THE FURNITURE IS ALL COVERED IN DUST SHEETS, AS IF THE HOUSE HAS BEEN SHUT UP FOR SOME TIME. ROCHESTER STANDS IN THE PARLOUR AREA. JANE IS SITTING IN HER ROOM WITH A BOOK.

BERTHA: There is one window, high up. You cannot see out of it. My bed had doors but they have been taken away. There is not much else in the room. A black press, a table in the middle, and two black chairs carved with fruit. They have high backs and no arms. The dressing room is very small, the room next to this one is hung with tapestry. Looking at the tapestry one day I recognised my mother dressed in an evening gown but with bare feet. She looked away from me, over my head, just as she used to do. In this room I wake early and lie shivering for it is very cold.

ROCHESTER BEGINS SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY TO STRIP OFF THE DUST SHEETS FROM THE FURNITURE. HE PULLS BACK THE DUST SHEET ON THE FINAL CHAIR AND FINDS ANTOINETTE UNDERNEATH, ASLEEP/DEAD. AS HE UNCOVERS ANTOINETTE JANE LOOKS UP FROM HER BOOK FOR A MOMENT. ROCHESTER COVERS ANTOINETTE AND STANDS UNCERTAINLY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM.

② Can I help you sir

THE PARLOUR  
EVENING. JANE AND ROCHESTER SIT IN SILENCE.  
JANE READING. ROCHESTER STARING AT ANTOINETTE'S CHAIR, WHICH IS NOW EMPTY.  
THE TEXT IS HEARD AS A V/O:

JANE: Can I help you, sir.  
Are you injured, sir? Do you need anything?

ROCHESTER: Nothing, thank you:

JANE: If you are hurt, and want help, sir, I can give it.

ROCHESTER: Thank you, I can manage.

THEY CONTINUE TO SIT IN SILENCE.

~~JANE: It is late, Mr Rochester, I must retire.~~

~~ROCHESTER: Good night, Miss Eyre.~~

JANE WALKS TO HER ROOM. AT ONE POINT SHE PASSES ANTOINETTE MOVING AROUND THE HOUSE. JANE DOES NOT NOTICE HER.

BERTHA:

\*

*Insert Page 41.*

When night comes I walk into their world. It is, as I always knew, made of cardboard. I have seen it somewhere before, this cardboard world, where everything is brown or red or yellow with no light in it. And cold, so cold. And whispering like I have heard all my life, but not the same voices. I listen but I can't understand what they say.

\*

### ③ The Examination.

THE PARLOUR

JANE AND ROCHESTER SIT IN SILENCE.

ROCHESTER: I am disposed to be gregarious and communicative tonight, Miss Eyre. And therefore I have sent for you. Speak. Speak.

JANE: (If he expects me to talk for the sake of talking, he will find he has addressed himself to the wrong person.)

ROCHESTER: You examine me, Miss Eyre. Do you think me handsome?

JANE: No, sir.  
(~~I should have replied by something vague and polite, but the answer slipped from my tongue.~~)

ROCHESTER: A singular reply Miss Eyre.  
What faults do you find in me?

JANE: Sir, I was too plain.

ROCHESTER: And you shall be answerable for it. Criticise me.  
I suppose I have all my limbs and features like any other  
man?

⊙ HE LOOKS AT HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR.

JANE: Yes sir.

ROCHESTER: Does my forehead not please you?

JANE: Yes sir.

ROCHESTER: Am I a fool?

JANE: No sir.

ROCHESTER: I read much in your eyes Miss Eyre. Be careful of what  
secrets you express with them.  
I must tell you that I am not a villain. Nature intended  
me to be on the whole, a good man.

ANTOINETTE APPEARS AS ROCHESTER'S REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR.

ROCHESTER: That I have faults, I cannot deny. But I might have been  
different. When fate wronged me, I had not the wisdom to  
stay cool. I turned desperate.  
I had a conscience once, and a rude tenderness of heart.

JANE: Your sad heart.

ROCHESTER: But we digress from outward signs.  
My eyes, Miss Eyre. What can you tell me about my eyes?

JANE: Excuse me, sir.

JANE LEAVES. ANTOINETTE SCRUTINISES HER. TOUCHES HER BRIEFLY.

*Insert  
Bertha's Speech page 40.*

*Shadow thoughts*

THE GARDEN.

JANE WRITING IN HER NOTEBOOK

ANTOINETTE, AND THEN ROCHESTER, STAND AND WATCH HER.

JANE: But was Mr Rochester ugly in my eyes? No reader, many associations, all pleasureable and genial, made his face the object I most liked to see. Most true it is that 'beauty is in the eye of the gazer.' My master's colourless, olive face, square massive brow, broad and jetty eyebrows, deep eyes, strong features, firm, grim mouth were not beautiful according to rule, but they were more than beautiful to me..'

ROCHESTER: What are you doing?

JANE: You startled me sir.

ROCHESTER: Forgive me. What are you doing?

JANE: Writing, sir.

ROCHESTER: Do you mind if I watch?

JANE CONTINUES TO WRITE UNCOMFORTABLY. ROCHESTER WATCHES.

ROCHESTER: What are you writing?

JANE: A fiction, sir, with which I occupy myself.

ROCHESTER: Show me .

JANE LOOKS AT HIM

ROCHESTER: I have put my request in an insolent form.  
I do not wish to treat you like an inferior.

JANE: I do not mistake informality for insolence sir.  
I am surprised you trouble yourself to enquire whether your paid subordinates are piqued by your orders.

ROCHESTER: My claim to your company Miss Eyre, does not rest on the fact that I pay you the paltry sum of thirty pounds a year.

JANE: Then on what does it rest, sir?

ROCHESTER: Are you happy when you write Miss Eyre?

JANE: Yes, sir. Very happy, and absorbed. It is one of the keenest pleasures I have known.

ANTOINETTE: I am not used to happiness. It makes me afraid.

ROCHESTER: But the pleasures you have known have been few, haven't they ?

JANE SAYS NOTHING

ROCHESTER: And are you happy with the results of your work?

JANE: In each case, sir, I imagine something which I am powerless to realise.

ROCHESTER: Not quite. I can see the shadow of your thought.

I like this day. I like this sky of steel. I like the sternness and the stillness of Thornfield under this frost; its antiquity. And for a long time I have been forced to shun it like a plague house.

JANE: Why sir?

ANTOINETTE STANDS LOOKING AT ROCHESTER.

ROCHESTER: The shadow of my thought, Miss Eyre.

⑤

ARSON.

JANE WALKS TO HER ROOM, AGAIN PASSING ANTOINETTE WITHOUT SEEING HER.

JANE THEN GETS UNDRESSED AND READY FOR BED.

ROCHESTER IN THE PARLOUR IS DRINKING, HE FALLS ASLEEP IN THE CHAIR.

ANTOINETTE LIGHTS A CANDLE. SHE STANDS OVER JANE IN BED FOR A MOMENT AND THEN GOES TO ROCHESTER. SHE WATCHES HIM SLEEP.

BERTHA SPEAKS OVER THIS SEQUENCE.

BERTHA:

As I walk along the passages, I want to see what is behind the cardboard. They tell me I am in England but I don't believe them. We lost our way to England. I don't remember when but we lost it.

Was it that night in the cabin when he found me talking to the young man who brought me food? I put my arms around his neck and asked him to help me. He said 'I don't know what to do, sir.' I smashed the glasses and plates against the porthole because I hoped the sea would come in. But a woman came in and an older man and they cleared the broken things up off the floor. The third man said 'Drink this and you will sleep.' I said 'It isn't like it seems to be,' and he said 'I know, it never is' and I drank it and slept.

⑤ When I woke up it was a different sea. Colder. It was that night I think that we changed course and lost our way to England. This cardboard house where I walk at night is not England. It is too dark. Too cold.

ANTOINETTE SETS FIRE TO ROCHESTER.

JANE WAKES UP.

JANE:

Who is there? Who is there?

JANE BECOMES AWARE OF SMOKE DRIFTING ACROSS FROM ROCHESTER.

SHE TRACES SMOKE TO ROCHESTER'S CHAIR. FINDS A VASE OF FLOWERS BY HIM,

DRENCHES HIM. STANDS HOLDING THE VASE IN HER NIGHTDRESS.

ANTOINETTE IS STANDING OVER ROCHESTER. HE WAKES AND SEES HER.

*Who is there?*

ROCHESTER:

Don't touch me. ~~Are you trying to kill me?~~

JANE:

~~No sir, I am not.~~ But you were on fire sir, so I used the water to put it out.

ROCHESTER:

Is that Jane? Miss Eyre?

JANE: Yes sir. The fire is out now. I will <sup>light</sup> ~~bring~~ you a candle.  
I will call someone.

ROCHESTER: There's no need to call anyone. Did you hear anything?

JANE LIGHTS THE CANDLE

JANE: We must raise the alarm.

ROCHESTER: There is no cause for alarm.  
It was an accident. — I fell asleep.  
Did you hear anything?

JANE: I heard someone sir, outside my door.

ROCHESTER: ⑤ Probably one of the servants.

JANE: Yes sir.

ROCHESTER: You must keep yourself secure Jane. You must fasten  
your door securely; protect yourself against accidents.

JANE: Yes sir.

ROCHESTER: Say nothing of this night's events to anyone Jane. I can  
trust you can't I? It can be our secret.  
Now return to your room. I shall go to mine. <sub>b</sub>

JANE: c. Good night then, sir.

ROCHESTER: Are you quitting me already, and in that brief dry  
fashion?

JANE: You said I might go, sir.

ROCHESTER: But not without taking leave. You have saved my life,  
Jane, and you make to walk past me as if we were total  
strangers. At least let us shake hands.

ROCHESTER: To owe my life to any other living being would be a burden to me, but I have great pleasure owing you so vast a debt. It becomes a benefit.

JANE: There is no debt, or burden, or benefit in the case, sir. Goodnight.

ROCHESTER: I knew you would do me good in some way, at some time. I beheld it in your eyes when I first saw you. Their expression and smile did not strike delight into my very inmost heart for nothing.

JANE: I am glad I was able to help you, sir. Goodnight.

ROCHESTER: You will go Jane?

JANE: Yes sir. I must.

ROCHESTER: But do you want to?

JANE: I am cold, sir.

ROCHESTER: Cold, of course you are. Go then.

ROCHESTER DOESN'T LET GO OF JANE'S HAND. EVENTUALLY SHE PULLS HER AWAY.

ROCHESTER: My cherished preserver. Sleep well.

JANE RUNS BACK TO HER BED. WRITES FRANTICALLY IN HER NOTEBOOK.

JANE: Sleep? Sleep? All night long I lay tossed on a buoyant sea, where billows of trouble rolled under surges of joy. Beyond the wild waters a sweet and distant shore beckoned, but though urged on by fancy, I could never quite reach it. A counteracting breeze blew off the land and continually drove me back. Sense resisted delirium. Judgement tempered passion.



BERTHA: Something happened tonight I think, or maybe a long time ago. The man who hates me came to see me. He said I tried to kill him. Maybe I did, I can't remember. I remember walking through their cardboard world, and I remember a girl. She stopped and looked round, but she saw nothing but shadows. And I remember a candle; it was bright in that dark cardboard world. Maybe I did try to kill him, and maybe I just wanted to be warm. It is so cold.

⑥ THE MORNING AFTER. *Brandy for Breakfast*  
 ROCHESTER SITS IN THE PARLOUR, DRINKING BRANDY. JANE COMES FROM HER ROOM.

JANE: Good morning, sir.

ROCHESTER SAYS NOTHING.  
 JANE POURS HERSELF SOME COFFEE.

JANE: Coffee, sir?

ROCHESTER: No thank you Miss Eyre.

JANE SITS IN ANTOINETTE'S CHAIR. HE AVOIDS LOOKING AT HER. THE TEXT IS AGAIN HEARD AS A VOICE OVER. *Pause*

JANE: Can I help you, sir.  
 Are you injured, sir? Do you need anything.

ROCHESTER: Nothing, thank you.

JANE: If you are hurt, and want help, sir, I can give it.

ROCHESTER: Thank you, I can manage.

JANE FINISHES HER COFFEE. SHE LEAVES ROCHESTER SITTING ALONE, LOOKING AT THE CHAIR.

## ② the confrontation

ROCHESTER GOES TO A TRUNK OF CLOTHES. HE TAKES OUT A WEDDING VEIL.  
ANTOINETTE APPEARS BUT HE DOESN'T SEE HER. HE TALKS TO THE VEIL.

ROCHESTER: I wish that what happened between us had never happened.  
I can't say more than that.

ANTOINETTE SAYS NOTHING.

ROCHESTER: I know that I made you very unhappy. I know that.

ANTOINETTE SAYS NOTHING

ROCHESTER: What I have done many people would think wrong. I know that. But I thought it for the best.

ANTOINETTE: ~~An English house. An attic room. A scribble on a scrap of paper.~~ Was that the best you could do?

ROCHESTER: I have suffered too you know.

ANTOINETTE: Your sad heart.

ROCHESTER: I ~~just~~<sup>only</sup> want to be happy.

ANTOINETTE: I have been too unhappy. It cannot last, being so  
② unhappy, I thought. It would kill me. But it hasn't.

ROCHESTER: I know. I do know. And I am sorry.

ANTOINETTE: 'Forgive me. I have made a terrible mistake.'?

ROCHESTER: Yes. Forgive me. Please.

ANTOINETTE: What do you really want?

ROCHESTER: I want to wake up in the morning <sup>at peace</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>I want to</sup> eat my breakfast, and ~~look at the sun on the trees in peace.~~ I want to live in my home and lead a normal life. Is that so much to ask?

ANTOINETTE: You came to my home and you took it from me. My home. I loved that place and you made it into a place I hated. I used to think if everything else went out of my life I would still have that, and you took it from me, so that it was just somewhere else like all the other places in my life. Somewhere else I was afraid and unhappy.

ROCHESTER: If there were something I could do to make amends, to atone, I would.

ANTOINETTE: There is nothing. Nothing you can do. You watched me break myself up for you. ~~You watched me float out of the window.~~ You watched me die. And there is nothing you can do because the worst of it is I am still alive. I wake up here every morning in this cold dark place. I still wake up alone. Still here. And I am still alive.

ROCHESTER: Forgive me.

Ⓒ ANTOINETTE SPITS AT HIM.

ROCHESTER: Forgive me.

ANTOINETTE: Make my unhappiness, I will make yours. We'll see who hates best. Your words.

ROCHESTER: Are you saying you won't forgive me?  
I wish to God you would die. (HE TRIES TO LEAVE).

ANTOINETTE: What are you going to tell her?  
You frightened?

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① THE CONFESSION

ROCHESTER AND JANE IN THE PARLOUR. EVENING.

ANTOINETTE WATCHES HIM. SHE IS WEARING THE WEDDING VEIL.

ROCHESTER: Imagine yourself in a remote foreign land. You there commit a capital error, no matter of what nature, or from what motives, but one whose consequences must follow you and taint your life. Mind, I don't say a crime, my word is error.

ANTOINETTE: Forgive me, I have made a terrible mistake.

ROCHESTER: The results of what you have done become in time utterly unsupportable to you. You take measures to obtain relief: unusual measures, but neither unlawful nor culpable. Still you are miserable.

ANTOINETTE: I'll watch for one tear. One human tear. Not that blank, hating, moonstruck face.

ROCHESTER: And then you make a new acquaintance, and you find in this stranger much of the good and bright qualities which you have sought for twenty years. You enjoy higher wishes, purer feelings. You desire to recommence your life.

ANTOINETTE: She'll have no lover, for I don't want her and she'll have no other.

ROCHESTER: To achieve this end, are you justified in overleaping an obstacle of custom, a mere conventional impediment which neither your conscience sanctifies nor your judgement approves?

JANE: He paused for an answer, and what was I to say?

ANTOINETTE: No!

ROCHESTER: Is this man justified in daring the world's opinion in order to attach himself to this gentle stranger, if in doing so he secures peace of mind and regeneration?

ANTOINETTE: No!

JANE: Sir, a sinner's reformation, or a person's happiness should never depend on a fellow creature. God alone can provide the instrument for our cure.

ROCHESTER: And he has, Jane. I propose to marry.

ANTOINETTE: No!

JANE: Who sir?

ROCHESTER: A woman, Jane, with the means to secure my happiness.

ANTOINETTE: No!

ROCHESTER: <sup>a</sup> Dread remorse when you are tempted to err. Remorse is the poison of life. You seem to doubt me. I do not doubt myself. I know what my aim is, what my motives are, and I know that both are just.

ANTOINETTE: Justice. I've heard that word. It's a cold word. I tried it out. I wrote it down. I wrote it down several times and always it looked like a damn cold lie to me. There is no justice.

JANE: Repentance is said to be its cure, sir.

ROCHESTER: What?

JANE: The cure for remorse sir.

ROCHESTER: There is no point in thinking of it, hampered, burdened, cursed as I am. My happiness lies in marriage.  
<sup>b</sup> What do you say to that Miss Eyre?

JANE: I think sir, that you think too much of the love of other people.

ROCHESTER: And you, Miss Eyre?

JANE: It is late sir. I must retire.

② THE DRAWINGS *Images*  
JANE IN HER ROOM. SITS AT THE MIRROR.

JANE: You, a favourite with Mr Rochester? You, able to please him? You, of importance to him in any way? Your folly sickens me. Look at yourself and be ashamed. He once said something about your eyes did he? Look at your eyes. You are blind. It does a woman no good to be flattered by a man who cannot possibly intend to marry her.

Listen then Jane Eyre, to your sentence. Draw in chalk your own portrait, faithfully, without softening one defect; omit no harsh line, smooth away no displeasing irregularity, and write under it:  
'Portrait of a Governess. Disconnected, Poor and Plain.'

JANE FINDS A STUB OF PENCIL AND BEGINS TO DRAW HER REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR.

BERTHA: There is no looking glass here, and I don't know what I am like now. I remember watching myself brush my hair, and how my eyes looked back at me. Long ago when I was a child and very lonely I tried to kiss the glass between us - hard, cold, and misted over with my breath. Now they have taken everything away.  
Now it's me that's cold, and who am I?

JANE FINISHES HER SELF-PORTRAIT. SHE ASSESSES IT. ANTOINETTE APPEARS IN THE MIRROR.

JANE: Now take a piece of smooth ivory; choose your most delicate pencils; delineate carefully the loveliest face you can imagine.  
Paint it in your softest shades and sweetest hues.  
No snivelling! No sentiment! No regret! I will endure only sense and resolution. Portray faithfully her attire; the aerial lace, the shimmering veil. Picture her dazzling arms, her graceful hands, her beautiful face. And call it 'Mrs Rochester.' And when you should fancy to think Mr Rochester thinks well of you, take out these two pictures and compare them.

AS SHE DRAWS IT IS ANTOINETTE'S IMAGE IN THE MIRROR SHE IS WORKING FROM.  
FOR A SECOND SHE REALLY SEES HER.

JANE: Who is there? Who is there?

BERTHA: Qui est la? Qui est la?

JANE: It is madness in all women to let a secret love kindle within them which, if undesired, and unreturned, must devour the life that feeds it.

JANE: (SINGS) WHY DID THEY SEND ME SO FAR AND SO LONELY  
UP WHERE THE MOORS SPREAD AND GREY ROCKS ARE FILED?  
MEN ARE HARD HEARTED AND KIND ANGELS ONLY  
WATCH O'ER THE STEPS OF THE POOR ORPHAN CHILD.

YET DISTANT AND SOFT THE NIGHT BREEZE IS BLOWING  
CLOUDS THERE ARE NONE, AND CLEAR STARS BEAM MILD.  
GOD IN HIS MERCY PROTECTION IS SHOWING,  
COMFORT AND HOPE TO THE POOR ORPHAN CHILD.

THERE IS A THOUGHT THAT FOR STRENGTH SHOULD AVAIL ME,  
THOUGH BOTH OF SHELTER AND KINDRED DESPOILED,  
HEAVEN IS A HOME AND A REST WILL NOT FAIL ME:  
GOD IS A FRIEND TO THE POOR ORPHAN CHILD.

BERTHA BEGINS TO SING WITH HER, HESITANTLY.  
ROCHESTER LISTENS TO THE TWO WOMEN SINGING. HE MAKES A DECISION.

③ FORTUNE TELLING.

ROCHESTER GOES TO THE TRUNK OF ANTOINETTE'S CLOTHES. SHE WATCHES HIM. HE FINDS THE RED DRESS. HE PUTS IT ON AND COVERS HIS FACE WITH A VEIL.

HE SITS IN CANDLE LIGHT.

JANE HAS LEFT HER ROOM TO FIND THE SINGING. SHE SEES HIM.

JANE: Who are you? Who are you?

ROCHESTER: ~~One who can see your future.~~

JANE: ~~What is your name?~~

ROCHESTER: Bertha.

JANE APPROACHES HIM.

ROCHESTER: Why do you not tremble?

JANE: Because I am not cold.

ROCHESTER: Why are you not pale?

JANE: Because I am not sick.

ROCHESTER: Why do you not <sup>shun me</sup> ~~trust my art~~?

JANE: Because I am not silly.

ROCHESTER: You are silly, because although you suffer, you will not let what waits for you approach, nor stir one step to meet it.  
You are cold because you are alone; no contact sparks the fire that is within you.  
You are sick, because the best of feelings, the highest and sweetest, keeps far from you.

JANE: (I wondered what unseen spirit had been watching the workings of my heart.)

ROCHESTER: If you want me to say more you must show me your palm.

⑨ JANE GIVES HIM HER HAND. *Jane and cross it with silver I suppose.*

ROCHESTER: The skin is too fine. I can make nothing of such a hand. Besides, your destiny is not written in your hand.

JANE: ~~I believe you.~~

ROCHESTER: No, it is written in your face. Kneel, and lift up your head.

↳ JANE KNEELS IN FRONT OF HIM. HE HOLDS HER FACE

ROCHESTER: The forehead; your forehead tells me you can live alone, if self-respect and circumstance require you to do so. Reason sits firm, and holds the reins, and passion and desire follow the guiding of that still small voice of conscience which you have within you.



ROCHESTER: But your eyes; flame flickers in your eyes. They shine like dew. they are soft and full of feeling. And they are sad from loneliness.

JANE PULLS AWAY

ROCHESTER: Pride and reserve only confirm my discoveries. The eyes are favourable.

JANE: Favourable to what?

ROCHESTER: Do you wish me to continue?

JANE: Yes; do continue.

HE HOLDS HER FACE AGAIN

ROCHESTER: Your mouth, then. Your mouth delights at times in laughter. It is capable of telling your every thought, but it sits silent on much the heart experiences. It was never intended for silence, or for solitude. It is a mouth which should speak much, and smile more often, and be used for human affection -

JANE: Continue.

ROCHESTER: I should wish to protract this moment - but I dare not. So far I have governed my self thoroughly. I have acted as I inwardly swore I would act; but further might try me beyond my strength.

JANE DOESN'T MOVE

ROCHESTER: Well Jane, do you know me?

JANE: Only lift the veil sir, and then...

ROCHESTER: Help me.

JANE: I cannot sir. You must do it.

④ HE LIFTS THE VEIL. IS ABOUT TO KISS HER.

JANE: ⑤ It is late sir. I must -

ROCHESTER: Stay Jane.  
You have heard your fortune, and now you must hear mine.  
I am to be married.

JANE: C Then I see the necessity of my departure sir. And it is something like looking on the necessity of death.

ROCHESTER: What shape does this necessity take?

JANE: Your wife. Your beautiful bride.

ROCHESTER: I have no wife. But I will.

JANE: Then I must go. Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? Do you think I can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup. Do you think because I am poor and obscure and plain that I am soulless and heartless? If God had given me beauty you would know it is I who have the means to make you happy.

And it would be as hard for you to leave me, as it is for me to leave you.

ROCHESTER: Do not leave me Jane.

JANE: I must.

ROCHESTER: Jane. I am asking you to pass through life at my side.

JANE: For that fate you have already made your choice and must abide by it.

ROCHESTER: Jane. Do not leave me.

JANE: Your bride stands between us.

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ROCHESTER: My bride is here, and my equal, and my likeness. It is only you I intend to marry.

HE HOLDS HER. HE SPEAKS TO ANTOINETTE

ROCHESTER: Have I not found her friendless and cold and comfortless? Will I not guard and cherish her? Is there not love again in my heart? It will atone. It will atone.

④ Night Thoughts

BERTHA: I wear a grey dress here. I didn't wear it before. I remember that. I wore a red dress. But I don't know where it is now. I wrote a letter. I remember that. But where is it? Where did I hide it? In the pocket of the red dress? Perhaps I lost it. I can't remember. It was short, only a short letter, because I remembered that he didn't like long letters. I remembered that. It said 'Please take me away from this place where I am dying because it is so cold and dark.'

JANE'S SECOND DREAM:

JANE: (V/O) I was following an unknown road, darkness enveloping me; rain pelting down; and I was burdened with the charge of a little child. A very small creature, too young and feeble to walk, which shivered in my arms, and wailed piteously in my ear. And I was following the man I loved along the road, but he was a long way ahead of me. I tried to run after him, I tried to call out his name, but my movements were fettered, and my voice died in my throat, and the child in my arms was crying.

⑤ Dressing Up

THE CLOTHES

BRIGHT SUNLIGHT. A HEAP OF CLOTHES PULLED OUT OF THE TRUNK.  
JANE AND ROCHESTER LAUGHING.

ROCHESTER: Jane. You must choose one of these. You must have a new dress. You must have six new dresses.

JANE: You might as well buy me a gold bonnet and a silver shawl sir, as dress me in these colours. I do not wear bright clothes.

If you look at me like that, sir, I will wear nothing but my old frocks until the end of the chapter. I will get married in this dress. You can make a dressing gown for yourself out of that pink silk.

ROCHESTER: So you would rather continue to be a poor, plain little governess than to dress as my wife?

JANE: I am a poor, plain, little, governess, sir.

ROCHESTER: This dress. This one here. Do you like this dress?

JANE: Yes sir. But the colour is not a colour I would wear.

ROCHESTER: Then we will have another made in a colour that you like, but exactly like it. Will you be pleased?

JANE: Yes. <sup>pink</sup> But it doesn't matter.

*No No it doesn't matter*

BERTHA: (SINGS) ALL OF ME, WHY NOT TAKE ALL OF ME,  
CAN'T YOU SEE, I'M NO GOOD WITHOUT YOU?  
TAKE MY LIPS I WANT TO LOSE THEM.  
TAKE MY ARMS I NEVER USE THEM

YOUR GOODBYE LEFT ME WITH EYES THAT CRY.  
HOW CAN I GO ON DEAR WITHOUT YOU?  
YOU TOOK THE PART THAT ONCE WAS MY HEART  
SO WHY NOT TAKE ALL OF ME?

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ROCHESTER: THE TRUEST LOVE THAT EVER HEART  
FELT AT ITS KINDLED CORE  
DID THROUGH EACH VEIN IN QUICKENED START  
THE TIDE OF BEING POUR.

I DREAMED IT WOULD BE NAMELESS BLISS  
AS I LOVED, LOVED TO BE  
AND TO THIS OBJECT DID I PRESS  
AS BLIND AS EAGERLY.

BUT WIDE AS PATHLESS WAS THE SPACE  
THAT LAY OUR LIVES BETWEEN  
AND DANGEROUS AS THE FOAMY RACE  
OF OCEAN SURGES GREEN

I DANGERS DARED, I HINDRANCE SCORNE  
I OMENS DID DEFY  
WHATEVER MENACED, HARRASSED, WARNED,  
I PASSED IMPETUOUS BY

STILL BRIGHT ON CLOUDS OF SUFFERING DIM  
SHINES THAT SOFT SOLEMN JOY  
NOR CARE I NOW, HOW DENSE AND GRIM  
DISASTERS GATHER NIGH.

I CARE NOT IN THIS MOMENT SWEET  
THOUGH ALL I HAVE RUSHED O'ER  
SHOULD COME SURE FOOTED, SOUND AND FLEET  
PROCLAIMING VENGEANCE SORE.

MY LOVE HAS SWORN, WITH SEALING KISS  
WITH ME TO LIVE, TO DIE:  
I HAVE AT LAST MY NAMELESS BLISS:  
AS I LOVE, LOVED AM I.

JANE: Who is your beloved?

ROCHESTER: Why do you ask such a question?

JANE: Because you sing of your beloved's death, and I do not  
want to die with you.

ANTOINETTE: I could die now. Now when I am happy.

ROCHESTER: Are you happy Jane? Are you happy.

ANTOINETTE: What about happiness, I thought. And I thought it doesn't  
matter.

JANE: I am not used to happiness. It makes me afraid. I cannot believe I was born to a different destiny from the rest of my sex.

ANTOINETTE: I have been too unhappy. It cannot last, being so unhappy, it would kill you.

ROCHESTER: Jane. I want you to be happy.

JANE: Can I believe there is not another living in this world who loves you as I do?

ROCHESTER: There is not another living who has the same pure love for me as yourself.

ANTOINETTE: Say die and watch me die.

ROCHESTER: ~~Is there not love again in my heart? It will atone.~~

THIRD 'HELP' SEQUENCE

JANE: Can I help you sir?  
Are you injured, sir? Do you need anything?

ROCHESTER: Nothing, thankyou.

JANE: If you are hurt, and want help sir, I can give it.

ROCHESTER: Thankyou. I can manage.

ROCHESTER GIVES JANE THE WEDDING VEIL, WITH A LABEL HE HAS TAKEN OFF THE TRUNK.

JANE: Mrs Rochester. It sounds so strange.

ANTOINETTE: You gave me a new name. That's obeah too.

ROCHESTER: Goodnight Mrs Rochester.

JANE: Not yet. Don't call me that yet.

*It will come*

BERTHA: Names matter. I didn't think they did, but they do. Like when he stopped calling me Antoinette. And I saw Antoinette float out of the window. Or through the mirror. I'm not sure now. A long time ago I think. Such a long time until it's over. But it still matters.

#### JANE'S SECOND DREAM

JANE: (V/O): I was at Thornfield, but Thornfield was a ruin. Nothing remained but a shell-like wall, very high and fragile looking. And I was carrying a little child, which shivered in my arms, and cried. I knew I couldn't lay it down, no matter how tired my arms were, no matter how much it impeded my progress. I knew I must hold on to it. I heard a horse galloping along a road, a long way off, and I knew it was the man I loved, and that he was departing for many years, and to a distant country.

I climbed the thin wall with frantic haste, desperate to catch one last glimpse of him from the top. Stones rolled from under my feet, the ivy I grasped pulled away in my hand, and the little child clung round my neck in terror, strangling me. At last I reached the top of the wall. And he was just a speck on the white road, growing smaller every moment. The wind was so strong I could not stand. I crouched down on the narrow ledge and tried to hush the scared infant in my arms. He turned an angle of the road, about to disappear from me for ever. I leaned forward to take a last look and the wall crumbled from under me. Stones slithered from under my feet. I lost my balance and tried to find something to cling onto and the little child slipped from my arms and fell. The child fell.

JANE ASLEEP IN BED. BERTHA COMES INTO HER ROOM WITH A CANDLE. STANDS OVER HER. LOOKS AT HER FACE.

SEES THE VEIL AND WEDDING DRESS HANGING READY. PICKS UP THE VEIL. GOES TO THE MIRROR. PUTS THE VEIL ON.

JANE WAKES, SEES HER.

JANE: Who are you? Who are you?

MORNING.

JANE WAKES UP. SEES THE RIPPED VEIL ON THE FLOOR.

JANE:                   And I woke up. and it wasn't a dream, it was true.

GETS UP, DRESSES HERSELF, USING A PLAIN PIECE OF WHITE CLOTH INSTEAD OF THE VEIL. ROCHESTER IS HEARD CALLING HER. JANE PAUSES TO LOOK AT HERSELF FOR A MOMENT IN THE MIRROR. SHE IS TRANSFORMED. SHE SMILES.

JANE:                   Good bye Jane Eyre.



9 Revelation

① THE SECOND WEDDING.

JANE AND ROCHESTER STAND AT THE ALTAR.

A MIRROR OF ANTOINETTE AND ROCHESTER'S WEDDING.

THEY SPEAK THEIR THOUGHTS, NOT LOOKING AT EACH OTHER, WHILE THE INTRODUCTION TO THE MARRIAGE SERVICE IS HEARD OVER, THE 'JUST CAUSE AND IMPEDIMENT' SECTION.

ROCHESTER: What would you do Jane, if people came in a body and spat at me?

JANE: I'd comfort you, sir, as well as I could.

ROCHESTER: But if people only looked at me coldly, and whispered sneeringly among one another, and then left me, one by one, what would you do?

JANE: I should stay with you, sir.

ROCHESTER: And if they laid you under a ban for adhering to me?

JANE: I would know nothing about the reason for their ban, and so would care nothing for it.

ROCHESTER: Then you could dare censure for my sake?

JANE: I would give my life for your sake.

ROCHESTER: I wish I were in a quiet island with only you, and trouble and danger, and hideous recollection far from me.

OVER THE LAST FEW LINES ANTOINETTE HAS COME TO STAND BESIDE JANE AT THE ALTAR. SHE IS WEARING THE TORN VEIL. HER BOUQUET OF FLOWERS IS DEAD.

JANE SEES ANTOINETTE, SHE FALTERS.

JANE: I wish... I wish...

ROCHESTER HAS SEEN ANTOINETTE, AND KNOWS THAT JANE CAN SEE HER.

ROCHESTER: Proceed! Proceed!

JANE: The marriage cannot go on, I declare the existence of an impediment.

ROCHESTER: Proceed!

JANE: It simply consists in the existence of a previous marriage. Mr. Rochester has a wife now living.

② *Bertha Mason*

SHE LOOKS AT ROCHESTER. HE SAYS NOTHING. HE GRABS HER ARM AND SHOWS HER BERTHA, WHO COWERS IN A CORNER, WHIMPERS IN PAIN.

ROCHESTER: This is my wife. This is Bertha Mason.

AT THE MENTION OF THE NAME, BERTHA GOES FOR ROCHESTER, BITING AND SCRATCHING. ROCHESTER GETS HOLD OF HER. HE IS DETACHED, PRACTISED. HE PINS HER ARMS BEHIND HER BACK. TIES HER TO THE CHAIR.

ROCHESTER: Silence. This violence is repulsive.

BERTHA BECOMES SILENT. IT IS A COMMAND SHE IS USED TO.

JANE: You hate her.  
Why do you hate her?  
Why are you so cruel to her?  
She can't help being mad.

ROCHESTER: I do not hate her because she is mad. You don't understand.

HE GOES TO HER, SHE PUSHES HIM AWAY.

Jane! Jane! I do not hate her for that. Do you think if you were mad that I should hate you?

JANE: Indeed I do, sir.



JANE: LIAR!

ROCHESTER: Concealing the mad woman's existence from you was like covering a little child with a cloak who is sleeping near a poison tree.

JANE: Lies. All lies.

ROCHESTER: Don't leave me Jane.

JANE: I must sir.

ROCHESTER: You cannot leave me Jane. You will tear out my heart.

JANE: Your heart shall be the victim, and yourself the priest to transfix it. Your sad heart.

SHE THROWS THE WEDDING DRESS AT HIM AND LEAVES. ROCHESTER CRADLES IT.

⑤ Redoubt

BERTHA HAS THE RED DRESS. SHE IS EXAMINING IT.

BERTHA: He gave me back my red dress. I remember now that he hadn't liked it anyway. My whore's dress. So why has he given it back to me? He has done the worst possible thing. He has changed it. A thing that had meaning like that, and he changed it when I wasn't looking. But how did he get the scent?

SHE SMELLS THE DRESS, HUNGRILY. THEN THROWS IT AWAY FROM HER. IT FANS OUT ACROSS THE FLOOR. SHE LOOKS AT IT. WHISPERING IS HEARD, LIKE THE FIRE AT COULIBRI.

BERTHA: If you are buried under a flamboyant tree, your soul is lifted up when it flowers. I remember that now.

THE FIRE AT THORNFIELD.

THE WHISPERING BUILDS. THE DREAM IS A VOICE OVER.

AS IT IS HEARD BERTHA AND ANTOINETTE WALK THROUGH THE HOUSE WITH CANDLES.  
A MASS OF CANDLES ARE LIT ALL OVER THE STAGE.

BERTHA SEES ANTOINETTE AS 'THE GHOST'.

BERTHA: (V/O) This was the last time I had my dream, and it ended.  
In my dream I got up and let myself out with a candle in my hand. It was easy this time. I walked as if I was flying. It seemed to me that someone was following me, someone was chasing me, laughing, but I never looked behind me for I did not want to see the ghost of a woman that they say haunts this place.

I came to a hall where a lamp was burning. A lamp and a dark staircase and the veil over my face. They think I don't remember that but I do. I opened a door and went in. I wanted to see the room clearly so I lit all the candles.

Suddenly I was at home with the sunlight streaming through the windows, but then I saw the wax candles again and I hated them so I knocked them all down. I laughed when I saw the lovely colour spreading so fast but I did not stay to watch it. I went into the hall again with a tall candle in my hand. It was then that I saw her, the ghost. She was surrounded by a gilt frame but I knew her.

ANTOINETTE: Qui est la? Qui est la?

BERTHA STARTS TO RUN IN A PANIC, CALLING FOR CHRISTOPHINE.

ROCHESTER IS CALLING BERTHA.

ANTOINETTE CLIMBS ONTO THE PLATFORM. THE OTHERS CAN BE HEARD CALLING VERY QUIETLY.

ANTOINETTE: When I was out on the battlements it was cool and I could hardly hear them. I sat there quietly. I don't know how long I sat. Then I turned round and saw the sky. It was red and all my life was in it. The wind caught my hair and it streamed out like wings. It might bear me up I thought if I jumped to those hard stones. When I looked over the edge Tia was there.

ANTOINETTE: Tia. Tia.

(V/O cont:.) All this in a fraction of a second. And the sky so red.  
And someone screamed, and I thought why did I scream?  
And I jumped. And woke.

THIS OVERLAPS WITH JANE'S THIRD DREAM SO THAT THEY END AT THE SAME POINT.

JANE (V/O): I climbed the thin wall with frantic haste, desperate to catch one last glimpse of him from the top. Stones rolled from under my feet, the ivy I grasped pulled away in my hand, and the little child clung round my neck in terror, strangling me. At last I reached the top of the wall. And he was just a speck on the white road, growing smaller every moment. The wind was so strong I could not stand. I crouched down on the narrow ledge and tried to hush the scared infant in my arms. He turned an angle of the road, about to disappear for ever from me. I leaned forward to take a last look and the wall crumbled from under me. Stones slithered from under my feet. I lost my balance and tried to find something to cling onto and the little child slipped from my arms and fell. The child fell.

ANTOINETTE FALLS. BLACKOUT.

ROCHESTER IS KNEELING OVER ANTOINETTE'S BODY. HE HOWLS, CANNOT LOOK. PUTS HIS HANDS TO FACE. AS HE CRAWLS AWAY IT IS CLEAR THAT HE IS BLIND

JANE COMES TO HIM. IT IS THE FIRST TIME THIS SEQUENCE IS SPOKEN.

JANE: Can I help you sir?

ROCHESTER IS SILENT.

JANE: Are you injured sir? Do you need anything?

ROCHESTER IS SILENT. MOVES AWAY.

JANE: If you are hurt and want help, sir, I can give it.

ROCHESTER: You may help me a little if you will be so kind.

JANE HELPS HIM UP. HE WALKS A FEW STEPS. HE STANDS, LOST. JANE RETURNS TO THE PLACE WHERE SHE SAT ORIGINALLY. ANTOINETTE LIES WHERE SHE STOOD. JANE GETS OUT HER BOOK AND READS. SHE IS TRYING TO BE THE CHILD AGAIN. SHE AVOIDS LOOKING AT ANTOINETTE.

JANE:

Once there was a man, sick at heart and lonely, who met a little fairy on the road. She hopped onto his hand, and told him she had been sent to make him happy. "Come away with me," she said, "to a land of golden rivers and silver valleys where we can leave pain and suffering far behind us." "But I have no wings and cannot fly," he said. She gave him a gold ring and said, "That requires only a simple conjuration. Put this on the fourth finger of your left hand, and together we will leave the earth and make our own heaven yonder."

SHE CLOSES THE BOOK.

Always stories with happy endings. Never the one about a woman in a cage, bent out of shape with pain. Never the one about a man blind to despair. And never the one about the woman who chose not to see.

SHE TRIES TO LOOK AT ANTOINETTE. CANNOT DO IT.

I didn't see her body. I wasn't there. But she comes to me in dreams so real that I wake chill with sweat. Dreams I've had for a long time now. Traitor. Listen then Jane Eyre to your sentence. 'Do you think that if you were mad, Jane, I should hate you?' 'Indeed I do sir.'

And reader I married him. No snivelling. No sentiment. No regret. I will endure only sense and resolution. Leave flying to the birds. Better not to try. Better a mouthful of stones than ~~broken wings~~.

FINALLY SHE IS ABLE TO LOOK AT ANTOINETTE.

Before her body broke on the hard stones, she flew. Just for a moment. She hurtled herself into the empty air. And she flew.